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"TANNHÄUSER" AT COVENT GARDEN.

FROM no point of view can the production of Wagner's *Tannhäuser* at the Royal Italian Opera, Covent Garden, on the 6th of May last, and its subsequent repetitions be regarded as suggestive of satisfactory reflections by Wagner's admirers, except so far as its production here at all may be claimed as a sort of triumph over those who for so long have done their best to keep Wagner altogether out of the field. Those who have had experience of Wagner's operas in Germany, naturally look upon their production in Italian as only a shade better than not performing them at all. Our Italian Opera directors having apparently by their specious promises for so many years stood in the way of *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin* being brought to a hearing here by a German company, we cannot feel under the least obligation to them because at last they have been compelled to yield to necessity. It is manifest, therefore, that we owe little to them. On it being determined, thanks principally to the instigation of Mr. Santley, to bring *Der Fliegende Holländer* to a hearing at Her Majesty's Opera, Drury Lane, in 1872, its presentation was put off till the last two nights of the season. Of the far from satisfactory treatment which *Lohengrin* received last season at both opera houses, we spoke at the time. Of the recent production of *Tannhäuser* at the Royal Italian Opera, Covent Garden, it is impossible to speak in terms more satisfactory than we have been able to apply to the previous attempts of presenting Wagner's operas in Italian.

Popularised as *Tannhäuser* has become in almost every capital of the civilised world, one cannot be blind to the fact that, apparently having been composed under an evil star, its course has not always been a path of roses, and that ill-luck has attended its production on more than one occasion. One cannot but sympathise with Wagner on recalling the difficulties he had to contend with in bringing it to a first hearing. On making the most strenuous efforts to get it accepted in Berlin, he was repelled by the Intendant of the Prussian Theatres Royal with a critical intimation that it was too "epically" treated for production in Berlin. On requesting the Intendant-General of Music at the Prussian Court to ask permission for him to dedicate *Tannhäuser* to the King, in order to interest him in its behalf, he received in reply the advice that as, on the one hand, the King only accepted works with which he was already acquainted, and, on the other, there were obstacles to its performance at the Royal Opera House, Berlin, the Intendant thought that, in order to make the King acquainted with it, he had better arrange some of it for a military band, so that his Majesty might hear it on parade. Could anything have been more profoundly humiliating? In 1845 *Tannhäuser* was at length brought to a first hearing at Dresden, but without at once meeting with the success which had attended the production there of *Rienzi* in 1842. On its performance, "by command," at the Grand Opera, Paris, in 1861, its fate, so far as for the time being Paris was concerned, was settled by a disgraceful cabal, in some way similar to that which was organised by the Italian faction to "damn" Berlioz's *Benvenuto Cellini* on its production in London. The substitution of the Paris version of the opening scene towards the close of last year, in Vienna, for that which had so long been familiar there, probably for this very reason, even though it was surrounded with all the *éclat* to be derived

from the master's presence, was not accompanied with all the success that might have been anticipated. And now? How has *Tannhäuser* fared in London? Of course it has been Italianised to the last degree, even to Italianising—or shall we say Anglicising—its title by mis-spelling it in the bills and announcements. To Germans and to those who have familiarised themselves with the work in Germany, such a mode of procedure with so thoroughly German a work cannot be regarded otherwise than in the highest degree distasteful. On the other hand, it may be fairly questioned whether, perhaps, it is not to Wagner's advantage that his works should have been brought before opera-going audiences in England in the form most nearly approaching that to which they have been for so long accustomed. Had *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin* been first brought forward in their original tongue and style, it seems by no means unlikely that the contrast would have been so great that they would have met with a less ready acceptance among the generality of English opera-goers. As it has turned out, they have been so warmly received by the general public that the worst fears entertained by our Italian Opera directors that Wagner's operas would empty their theatres for other performances seem to have been to a great extent realised. Though Wagner is to be congratulated on the success which has attended the production of *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin* here, especially on account of the impetus which it has given to the desire to know more of his works, one cannot be blind to the many imperfections and shortcomings which, especially in the case of *Tannhäuser*, have accompanied their performance upon the Italian stage.

It is an admitted fact that of all German operatic works Wagner's loses the most by translation into another language—so close and inseparable is the connection between music and text. This is the most obvious objection to an Italian presentation of his works, but one which is unavoidable. There are others less obvious, and at the same time more easily avoidable. It is not so much the fact of *Tannhäuser* having been first presented in London in an Italian version, as the manner in which it was done, that seems most objectionable. It was the Italian mode of rendering so thoroughly German a work which jarred most against one's feelings. By all concerned—except by Mlle. Albani, who had studied her rôle in Germany, if not under Wagner, at least under one of the most competent of his disciples, and who, by giving every note its full and proper value, proved the possibility of an approximate German rendering, even in Italian—Wagner's declamatory passages were treated as ordinary recitative. This is a matter upon which Wagner has laid the greatest stress.

In a pamphlet on performing *Tannhäuser*, he has told us that in his operas no distinction is to be made between those passages which are to be declaimed and those which are to be sung; his declamation, he says, is at the same time singing, and his singing declamation. He recognises no point where singing leaves off and the once customary recitative begins—a practice which leads opera-singers to the adoption of two perfectly distinct styles of vocalisation. Nor does he admit the use of that Italian style of recitative which is almost devoid of rhythm, and the interpretation of which the composer leaves to the taste of the singer; but in those passages where the poem passes over from more passionate moments to mere discourse or narrative he has been careful to indicate the mode of performance to be followed with as much exactness as in the lyrical passages. "Whoever, therefore" (he writes), "substitutes ordinary recitative for such passages, and arbitrarily alters and deforms their rhythmical flow, disfigures my music just as much as if he were to assign other notes and other harmonies to my lyrical melodies." When

thus mal-treated, it is not surprising to hear critics, who have not had experience of a German representation, inveighing against the wearisomeness of the recitatives, which but for the arbitrary treatment exercised by singers have, in point of fact, no such existence. Another weak point in the Covent Garden representation was the stage mounting. The directions to the stage-manager laid down by Wagner with such minuteness in the full score, in the libretto, and in the pamphlet already referred to, but which no one seems to have consulted, seemed to have been altogether ignored, apparently from a desire to do the thing as cheaply as possible, or indeed, as we heard it hinted, to insure a *fiasco*. Thus, the interior of the Hörselberg, in which the goddess holds her lawless court—instead of being represented (as directed by Wagner, and as we have seen it in Germany) by a grotto, suffused by rosy light, with a waterfall in the background, a lake with naiads bathing, and sirens reposing on its banks, fauns, satyrs, and the Three Graces, &c.—was made to take the form of a “sylvan temple,” as one writer has elegantly expressed it, but which to our eyes was far more suggestive of a suburban tea-garden. The revels of nymphs and bacchantes were represented by a common-place ballet-dance, and the Venus reposed on a couch which but a few hours previously might have figured in the nearest upholsterer’s shop. The decorations of the Sängershalle were certainly gaudy enough, but were at least three centuries out of date. Among other absurdities a disagreeable clatter, suggestive of a boy scaring away birds in a corn-field, with far too much pertinacity was made to do duty for the sheep-bells towards the close of the second scene; and the Landgrave Hermann’s huntsmen with their horns appeared clustered on a rock, with the notes of their music actually before them! Opposed to these scenic short-comings, very high praise is due to the painting of the exterior of the Wartburg and the view of the valley beyond.

After what we have said as to the Italianising of Wagner’s work generally, there is no need to speak but very briefly of the impersonation of it. Mlle. Albani’s enaction of the part of Elizabeth, to which we have already alluded, was in the highest degree exemplary. It cannot, however, be regarded as so interesting or important a one as that of Elsa in *Lohengrin*. For in *Lohengrin* it must be remembered that it is with Elsa rather than with the Knight of the Swan that our sympathies centre, and that in *Tannhäuser* the brunt of the battle rests with the impersonator of the *title-rôle*. As Elizabeth, Mlle. Albani was no less perfect than as Elsa, a part which she thoroughly idealised. As *Tannhäuser*, Signor Carpi lacked the vigour necessary for a due impersonation of this part, but at the same time reaped credit by his finished and artistic singing—in the Italian manner. For the difficult and unthankful part of Venus, Mlle. d’Angeri could not be regarded as satisfactory. Though failing to enter into the spirit of the shepherd’s unaccompanied song, Mlle. Cottino may fairly be complimented on her just intonation. Sig. Capponi as the Landgrave Hermann, and M. Maurel as Wolfram did good service; and the less important parts of the four remaining bards were more or less well sustained by Signori Pavani, Sabater, Scolara, and Raguer. To the rendering of the concerted pieces and choruses, as well as to the band, praise is more especially due. That violence, however, was frequently done to the *tempi* by the conductor, Sig. Vianesi, notwithstanding the careful manner in which Wagner has metronomised them in the score, was not to be overlooked. Though Sig. Vianesi got through the overture (which on the first two nights was re-demanded and repeated) within two minutes of Wag-

ner’s *tempo*, the slow part was taken as much too slow as the quick part was too fast; and similar instances of mistaken *tempi* were but too frequent.

Of the plot of the opera and of the music, which has been made so accessible by the publication of cheap editions in various forms, and which must be familiar to all interested in the progress of the operatic stage, we feel it is, therefore, unnecessary to speak. One cannot but, however, venture upon a surmise as to what will be the eventual result in England of the warm reception thus far accorded to Wagner’s works. To those accustomed to German representations, it must be satisfactory to feel that *Tristan* and the *Meistersinger* would be utterly impossible in Italian, and that if the demand arise for a hearing of Wagner’s works, we must either import a German company or go to Germany to hear them.

ROBERT SCHUMANN : HIS PIANOFORTE WORKS.

BY FR. NIECKS.

CHAPTER III.—OP. 1—23, 26, 28.

(Continued from page 91.)

GRAND SONATA, Op. 14, composed in 1836. The strange title of the first edition of this work, “Concert sans Orchestre,” was not originally intended by Schumann; in adopting it he ceded to the wish of his publisher, Haslinger, who thought a sonata was not a saleable article. In the second edition, which appeared in 1853, the original title was restored, and with it the scherzo which had to be left out in the first edition, as of course a scherzo in a concerto would have been without precedent. Schumann wrote in 1839 to his master, Dorn: “No doubt there may be much of the struggles which Clara cost me in my music, and no doubt this has also been understood by you. The concerto, sonata, ‘Kreisleriana,’ ‘Davidsbündler,’ and ‘Novelletten’ were almost wholly occasioned by her.” We need not be told in order to find out that this work springs from the same source as his Op. 11. Here we have the same depth and intensity of feeling, if not more; but the passion is tempered and chastened. Manly dignity and tenderness are the distinguishing features of this sonata. As to its form, almost all that has been said of Op. 11 may be applied to it. The artificial though beautiful form of the sonata is little suited for the confidential outpouring of our composer: by-and-by he will find a more adequate form. There is a want of concentration in the first movement; it is like a lover’s confessions, full of episodes and repetitions. Still it was a noble and mighty endeavour to give voice to what so deeply stirred his heart, and it is this, imperfect though the form may be, which engages our sympathy and saves the work from oblivion. *Pectus est quod facit theologum*, and not only the *theologum*, but also the *musicum*. Aye, it is the heart that makes the musician. What are your artfully-contrived compositions if your heart’s blood does not run through them? Do not point back to the past. Much of what those men, to whom we musicians bow with deep reverence and highest admiration, have written is dead material—

blocks out of which the present builds noble palaces, and chisels grand and delicate sculptures. Not that all they left us is dead matter; they too felt and loved; they too knew sorrow and joy; but they lived at a time when the musical art had not yet reached that state of perfection which enables it to become the interpreter of the subtlest gradations in the scale of human emotions. They prepared the way for the poets to come. But have we been progressing ever since music was born in the western world? Who can answer the question? So much may be said, the art has become more and more spiritualised, it has become a power in modern life, an essential element in modern culture. There are many who smile at this as a presumptuous pretension, but what is the opinion of men worth who have never taken the least trouble to understand the import of music, and whose knowledge is derived from drawing-room displays and other doubtful sources?

In this sonata, as in the two others, it is the middle movements which give pure and unmixed satisfaction. The last movement is all colour, almost without distinct forms and outline—a surging of sound, a

“Langen
Und Bangen
In schwebender Pein;”

all, like the mood it portrays, is vague.

The Scherzo is full of pith and nerve. Already Schumann shows that he is the successor of Beethoven in this kind of composition. With all differences—and they are great—he sets forth, like him, a humanly significant contents, not merely graceful motions of an inventive fancy.

The best part of the work is the Quasi Variazioni on an Andantino of Clara Wieck. One naturally turns to the other variations on a theme of the same lady-artist, the impromptu composed four years previously. You remember what Reissmann wrote of the earlier work; let us now see what he has to say about the present one. “They” (the Quasi Variazioni) “are not like the former, only a homage rendered to the artist, but a gift of the heart, which was to find its echo in the kindred heart. Not cool enthusiasm but warmest *Innigkeit* (inmost feeling) speaks through them, and they belong to the most finished that Schumann has written.” The variations could not be better characterised. They are not a mere masking and dressing up of a theme, but a developing and deepening of its meaning which, in its fulness, the composer of the Andantino hardly suspected; and it is more, it is a wedding of two kindred spirits; indeed only thus the result could be brought about. From a purely artistic point of view one cannot but admire the unity of the whole, its simplicity, and the beautiful climax.

The “Fantasiestücke,” Op. 12, two books containing eight pieces, which are next in order of time, must satisfy even the severest critic. To begin with No. 1, can there be anything more perfect in form, more dreamily sweet? “It seems to be woven out of twilight.”



It is like a reminiscence of hours of peace and sweetest happiness, when the calm of the outer world was reflected

in our inner world, when here as there darkness mingled with light, and fancy on this mysterious canvas drew its soothing pictures. Schumann oftenest seems to concentrate all his powers in the microcosm, man; sometimes he seems to revel in the gorgeous luxuriance of Oriental splendour of forms and colours, but not seldom also he calls to our mind fields and woods, mountains and vales, landscapes dark and sunlit, the soft light of the moon and, above all, the glories of the setting sun. How is this relation of music with scenes of nature to be explained? Man is an instrument, a kind of Æolian harp on which nature plays; no wonder that the composer thus played upon produces music which will be recognised by us. Besides, music is the only language which can describe these vague impressions; not to mention the more lasting influences that either lie upon you like a nightmare or give you wings to soar heavenward. Watch the clouds as they pass now in thick black masses, then open to let the sun shine through in its glorious brightness, and notice how these quick alternating changes affect your whole being. Painting cannot give you the changes, it can give you only one glimpse, and reproduce only approximately the same impression; but music with its subtle language interprets every minutest bit of shade, every gleam of light. Observe also, in connection with this piece, that calm undisturbed states of the mind will always find their expression in symmetrical forms. Mendelssohn's “Lieder ohne Worte,” for instance, are perfect in their way; their symmetrical form corresponds to the rhythmical nature of the states of mind they portray. But it is different with passionate and inordinate emotions, they bear and even demand a rougher form. Accordingly, the second number, “Aufschwung” (Soaring), which is descriptive of an agitated state of mind, does not show the same smoothness of structure. This piece is full of fire, and the transcendent swing of the D flat major is especially Schumannesque. No. 3, “Why?” has an indescribable charm, and is of cloying sweetness. Only one who loved could write such melting sounds that come “o'er the ear like the sweet south that breathes upon a bank of violets, stealing and giving odour.” Yes, love is so full of mystery that the lover may well ask, “Why?”



No. 4, “Whims,” is a humorous piece. The whims are not of the disagreeable kind with which we embitter our friends' lives; it is a capricious blending of play and earnest, a wavering between mirth and melancholy, everything being unsettled but the all-underlying goodness of heart.

No. 5, “Night,” is very grand and deeply affecting; it stirs our innermost being. With the expiring light have vanished also peace and soothing imaginings; and dark

night brings with her thoughts of fear and pain. It is a fine counterpart to the first number; both are most significant, and so expressive that he who runs may read; they are no hieroglyphics.



No. 6, the "Fable," is a wonderful thing, and I will not spoil the story by telling it badly.

No. 7, "Traumeswirren" (Dream-visions), too is very beautiful, and no doubt owes its name to the gay shadow-like sounds which flit mockingly hither and thither—



and to the sombre but equally shadow-like ones which mysteriously glide by—



The last number is magnificent. What life and humour! The beginning of page 272 of Pauer's octavo edition fills me every time I play it, or hear it played, with new delight. There is in it an enjoyment of life, a beaming of sly mirth, an abundance of boisterous humour which cannot be resisted. Is "Climax" a good translation of "Das Ende vom Lied"? I think not, but can't suggest anything more appropriate. No. 8 of Op. 124 (Vol. IV., p. 1,009 of Pauer's octavo edition), Wasielowski thinks, may be reckoned as belonging to these pieces. At any rate it is marked in the catalogue as having been written in the same year (1839). If Schumann really intended it for this series, and on consideration rejected it, he showed good judgment.

The *genre* of *Fantasiestücke* was created by Schumann, and has since been much cultivated by other composers. That no one has succeeded so well as Schumann is natural; with them it has been an imitated form, with him it was the spontaneous expression of his individual nature. I am speaking relatively, for it would be ridiculous to deny all spontaneity to composers of *Fantasiestücke*, a form so free, so undefined. One has, however, to keep in mind that just on that account it presupposes, if it is to be cultivated with success, a peculiarly rich and fanciful mental constitution. A comparison of Mendelssohn's "Lieder" with Schumann's "Fantasiestücke" is interesting. The two classes of composition show us the peculiarities and innermost nature of the composers who originated them better perhaps than their greater works. It is in little things that a man's true nature reveals itself; he acts then without any great effort, is unguarded, and therefore most himself.

"Die Davidsbündler," eighteen characteristic pieces, Op. 6, composed in 1839. Wasielowski speaks rather lightly of these pieces. "They are," he says, "compared with the 'Fantasiestücke,' what clever sketches are to finished *genre* pictures. The musical kernel is throughout inferior to these; hardly here and there a development of the principal thought is noticeable; working out of *motivi* is almost out of the question." This inability to comprehend the deeper import of Schumann's music is quite characteristic of Wasielowski. His thorough belief in bulk and formulas blinds him to the subtler motions and more delicate touches of this rare and peculiar nature. It is true, the "Fantasiestücke" are of a more developed and finished form, to which, no doubt, in a great measure they owe their popularity; but the "Davidsbündler" possess qualities that ought to secure them against the danger of being pooh-poohed. The pieces are for the most part short, but if they are only sketches of a few lines, these lines are so firm, so significant, that we do not feel the want of more. If you ever have examined sketches of the great masters of pictorial art, you will understand my meaning. A sketch may be as great a piece of art as the most finished picture; indeed, there are sketches which never should become anything else. But are the pieces before us sketches? Are they not rather short poems full of that epigrammatic conciseness so peculiar to Schumann? I think this is the case. They are pregnant with meaning and truly characteristic. They differ from most so-called characteristic pieces in this, that they would be recognised as such without the information on the title-page, while in most cases one fails, notwithstanding the information, to find anything characteristic, and without it no one would ever imagine that they were intended for anything of the sort. And here I must once more refer to the Davidsbund. Schumann says of it: "The society was more than a secret one, since it existed only in the head of the founder" (preface to "Collected Writings"). And again: "The Davidsbund is a spiritual, romantic one, as you have long perceived. Mozart was as great a *Bündler* as Berlioz is now, as you are, without being nominated by diploma. Florestan and Eusebius are my dual nature, which I should like to blend into one as Raro did; the rest is to be found in the paper. The veiled ones are some of them real persons; there is also much out of the real life of the Davidsbündler" (letter to Dorn). This refers to the appearance of the "Davidsbündler" in the musical paper of which he was the editor, but may be found of use here. He who, misled by the original name "Davidsbündlertänze," expects dance-music, will be greatly disappointed. The word "dance" must be taken in a different sense. "They are dances," as Dr. A. Schubrig, the editor of the third edition, remarks, "which the Davidsbündler led the

Philistines." The "Marche des Davidsbündler contre les Philistins" furnishes the best commentary on these "dances." Reissmann says: "The single pieces are manifestations of moods which resulted from the conflict of the most secret statutes of the society with the world of reality,"—or in other words, from the conflict between art and craft, poetry and prose, romanticism and formalism.

The motto of Clara Wieck, with which the piece opens—



is like the sign of the prompter, after which the curtain rises and lays open to us the scene of action—the poet's soul. The eighteen scenes of which the performance consists are full of interest and surprising variety. The *dramatis personæ*, Eusebius and Florestan, in their monologues and dialogues unfold themselves more and more. Of these eighteen numbers some are signed by Eusebius, some by Florestan, others by both conjointly. One of the latter, and at the same time one of the finest and most extended, is the first:—



It is built on the above-mentioned motto of Clara Wieck, and breathes the most delicate tenderness, being a worthy offering to her whom he calls "The noble maiden," of whom he said that he had no words to tell "what being she was, what all she combined in herself," for whom his feelings were such "as could not be expressed in words," and of whom he wrote to a Vienna correspondent: "She will be with you at this moment; you will see, admire, and love her. She will surely play you some of my compositions; there you have them at their source." To discuss each piece singly would require too much time and space, I shall therefore make only one or two general remarks.

When treating of the "Fantasiestücke" I made mention of Mendelssohn, but there is another contemporary composer the nature of whose music has much in common with Schumann's—I mean Chopin. Yet there are great differences too, and perhaps the greatest, those which strike one most, are the manliness and healthy strength of the former, and the feminine morbid sensitiveness of the latter. There is strength in Chopin, but it is feverish, hectic; there is acutest sensibility in Schumann, but it is always supported by latent power. All has a healthy complexion in Schumann's music, even his melting

tenderness, his dreamy longing, such as the last extract from No. 1 and those from Nos. 2 and 14 will show:—



The chief distinguishing feature of Schumann's character is humour, a quality which presupposes depth of feeling and a healthy mental constitution. This quality moreover may serve us as a gauge to compare him not only with his contemporaries, but also with himself. There is nothing of the deep-toned humour of some of these pieces and the scherzo of the last sonata in his earlier works. The "Carnival" has been often lauded for its humour; I am not quite sure whether humour is in this case not a misnomer; if it is humour, it must be humour in its youth, not yet full-grown. In the "Carnival" we have more sprightliness, in the "Davidsbündler" more depth. The history of the humorous in music has yet to be written. It would be an interesting task and, I should say, not an ungrateful one. Will nobody attempt it? It necessitates no researches into grey antiquity, it is a growth of modern times, it prospers only in the pure air of freedom.

The "Davidsbündler" abound in examples of the freshness and humour of Schumann's music: not to go farther take No. 3—



The "Scenes from Childhood," thirteen easy pieces for the pianoforte, Op. 15 (1838), are real gems, but so well known that little need be said about them. "I have seldom seen anything more clumsy and narrow than what Rellstab" (a Berlin critic of note) "wrote about my 'Kinderscenen.' He thinks perhaps that I put a crying child before me and then seek the notes. The reverse is the case. Yet I do not deny that some children's heads were before my mind's eye while composing; the supercriptions were, of course, made afterwards, and are indeed nothing but subtler hints for reading and comprehension. But really Rellstab sometimes does not see beyond the A B C, and will have nothing but chords." The pieces are all short, and in song form; the execution is delicate and finished; they may be compared to miniature pictures. To be especially noted are—the charming No. 4 ("Entreating Child"), ending on the chord of the dominant seventh; No. 5 ("Quite Happy"), full of innocent enjoyment; No. 7 ("Dreaming"), so naïve and

airy; No. 12 ("Child falling Asleep"), remarkable for delicacy, and beautifully scored, if I may use the expression. "In the last number" ("The Poet Speaks"), says Dr. Brendel, "the composer asks, if I guess rightly, 'Why should we not transport ourselves back into the beautiful child-world, and for moments live in memory?'"

Schumann, in a letter to Reinecke, compares the "Album for Young People" with the "Scenes from Childhood." He writes: "Of course, one always loves the youngest children best; but these in particular have grown dear to my heart—and, indeed, straight out of the family-life. The first pieces in the 'Album' I wrote for my eldest child on her birthday, and thus one after another was added. It seemed to me as if I once more began composing anew. You will also trace some of the old humour here and there. They are quite different from the 'Kinderscenen.' These are reminiscences of an older person, for older persons, while the 'Christmas Album' contains rather foreshadowings, presentiments, future states for younger people."

In fine, the "Scenes from Childhood," as Brendel well puts it, "are not objective descriptions, but child-like moods of the man." That Schumann was able to transport himself back into the child-world, and to conjure up such truthful, lovely pictures of that happy time when innocent tenderness, amiable *naïveté*, and peaceful enjoyment of life are as yet unsullied and undisturbed by passion—this, I say, is a proof, if proof were wanted, of the purity, simplicity, and loving nature of his character.

(To be continued.)

[ERRATA.—In last Schumann article, page 88, column 1, 15th line from the foot of the page, for "perception of his earnestness" read "perception of his inwardness (*Innerlichkeit*)."

Column 2. "A perfect poem is the perfect expression of a perfect mind."]

TWO RECENT COMIC OPERAS.

Le Roi Pa dit, by Léo Delibes, and *The Golden Cross*, by Ignaz Brüll, figure conspicuously among the novelties in comic opera lately presented to the public of Germany. Although entirely independent of each other, they are yet similar in conception and treatment, and the libretto of both is moreover derived from French sources. Indisputable success has attended their production in Vienna, Berlin, and Dresden, and this is the more significant because they have nothing whatever in common with the dominant school of opera, which feeds almost exclusively on Wagner's example and his ideas. For once we are spared plagiarisms from *Lohengrin* and *Meistersinger*; for once two young composers have had the pluck to dispense with "endless melody" and that elaborate instrumental colouring which, essential and effective though it be in grand or lyric opera, is certainly out of place in light or comic opera. Neither Delibes in *Le Roi Pa dit*, nor Brüll in *Das Goldene Kreuz*, pretends to offer anything vast and grand; their music is not what Norman Macleod would call "an intellectual gale;" but it charms by its grace and simplicity, and gives proof not only of great talent, but of sound artistic judgment.

In both operas the scene is laid in France; *Le Roi Pa dit*—or *Der König hat's gesagt*, according to the German version—carries us back to the polite days of Louis XIV.; the *Golden Cross*, to Napoleon's Russian campaign. In *Le Roi Pa dit*, a French marquis of interminable pedigree, and the happy father of four daughters, is about to be presented at the court of the "Grand Monarque." But the Fates have denied him a son, and to face the king without one would indeed be ignominious. *Que faire?* In his dilemma he hits upon Benoit, a young peasant, who is made Count and heir forthwith. Benoit, much to the

distress of Javotte, his former love, plays his part *con amore*; but, having enjoyed the fun of his new dignity, he is quite content to retire from the scene and return to his Javotte and his village, when the marquis announces that, after all, no son is required: he has it on the best authority, for *le Roi Pa dit*.

The heroine of the *Golden Cross* is Christine, a village belle, who promises her hand to any one willing to serve in the Russian campaign instead of her brother, a conscript. A young nobleman who is passing through the village, is captivated by Christine's beauty, comes forward as substitute, and receives from Bonorand, an old sergeant, a golden cross as Christine's pledge. After the war, he returns as a stranger, determined to win Christine's love, not for the sake of the cross, but for his own sake. He succeeds; but, alas, she is pledged to the possessor of the cross, and the cross is not forthcoming: he lost it on the battle-field. Happily for both, the veteran sergeant arrives upon the scene; he confirms the identity and claims of the lover, and the difficulty is solved to the satisfaction of all parties.

Both stories are extremely simple; but there is a singular idyllic charm in the action which, though without any very important dramatic situations, is still interesting throughout. The same may be said of the music. Both Delibes and Brüll have carefully avoided those conventional and trivial phrases which modern composers so often employ as stop-gaps. There is throughout an easy, spontaneous flow of melody; the harmony is clear and transparent, the instrumentation is effective, but judiciously kept within bounds. Some of the leading subjects of Delibes' opera have much of the rhythm and pastoral charm of Gluck's gavottes about them; the airs, couplets, and ballets in both operas are extremely pretty, and some of the ensembles are masterpieces of skilful arrangement and refined taste. Among the airs, I may mention the serenade in the first act, and the couplets (No. 16) in the third act of *Le Roi Pa dit*, as well as the air "Fahr wohl" in the *Golden Cross*; among the ensembles, the finale in the second act of Delibes' and the finale in the first act of Brüll's opera. But the leading characteristic of both works is that the most pleasing effects are produced by the simplest of means. They owe their success to the adequacy of the music. Jean Paul, comparing the sublime to the idea conveyed by a Gothic spire, defines the comical as "the sublime turned upside down." Delibes and Brüll, in treating the comic and pastoral subjects before them, seem to have borne in mind this definition. For there is, in their operas, no striving after sublimity, no perceptible effort at originality or something startling; it is all simple, straightforward writing and good music, and these two musical idylls would probably please even a Theocritus.

Both works may be safely recommended to enterprising *impresarios*; for the refined comic muse is like the "beauty" of whom Heine speaks in his "Hartz Journey": "her countenance is one of those which never excite, and seldom enrapture, but which always please." C. P. S.

THE PROFESSOR ON THE GIGANTIC.

"WELL, my dear madam, and how do you like it?" inquired the Professor of the lady at his side.

Harry and his wife had tempted the old gentleman into accompanying them to hear a grand performance at the ——— Palace. She really looked charmingly pretty, did Mrs. ———, as she sat between the two gentlemen, her face beaming with pleasurable excitement, and her bright eyes travelling hither and thither over and about the gay scene; and her senses were like her eyes, wool-gathering; so she heard him not.

Her husband's voice repeating the words brought her partially to, and she murmured—

"Oh, yes—isn't it lovely, Harry? What a number of well-dressed women!"

The gentlemen fairly laughed, at which she roused up, and an explanatory conversation was imminent, when the appearance of a great public favourite attracted universal attention, and as the gigantic concert proceeded, the episode was forgotten.

And after the concert a short promenade; then came dinner; and the return home brought the day's outing to a pleasant close.

"Well, Professor," said the lady, as they sat over their tea, "and how did you like it?"

"That is the very question he asked you in the middle of the concert, my dear," said her husband.

A puzzled expression crossed her face for a moment, and then vanished into a bright smile, as she replied—

"Oh, I see now; yes, and you were laughing at me, I remember, because I was *distracted*, and so answered at random."

"Well," said the old gentleman, "you can easily repair that mischief, my dear madam, by telling us now."

"Perhaps not so easily as you suppose."

"*Mais pourquoi?*"

"Because *now* and *then* are two different starting points."

"How so? do tell us."

"What, 'upon compulsion?' as the fat knight has it—never! I infinitely prefer exercising the privilege of my sex, and demanding your opinion first. How did you like it?"

"As a whole," replied the old gentleman, "I enjoyed the day immensely—indeed, how could I do otherwise? The weather was fine, the grounds looked lovely, and we wandered about in a kind of fairyland, surrounded by masses of rare shrubs, plants, and flowers; pictures, statues, articles *de luxe*, and, as you put it, a number of well-dressed women."

"No! no!" she interrupted, with a little impatient tap of her foot on the ground, "you know I did not mean that."

"Oh! A thousand pardons; you allude to the dinner. *Vraiment*, it was perfection; the *ris de veau à la Russe* was delicious, and as for the *crème fouettée de pistache*, I am sure it was simply ravishing."

"Really, Professor, you are most provoking. Did we not go on purpose to hear the music?"

"I believe we did."

"Well, then, how did you like *that*?"

"The music," replied the Professor, "was what it always must be, glorious; but for the effect it created as the true interpretation of a grand artistic conception I won't say much. These monster affairs invariably disappoint me: I agree with Schumann, 'the gigantic is a death-blow to art.' We go on year after year increasing auditorium, orchestra, and chorus, quite regardless of the fabled frog. Ah! poor frog, I can't help thinking it was a great pity he had not a looking-glass placed before him during the process of swelling—possibly the sight of his own distortion might have saved him from the final catastrophe."

"Do you mean to call that fine chorus we heard to-day a distortion?" inquired Harry.

"Certainly not, taken *per se*; but in the representation of such a work as that placed before us at the Palace, there are other points to be considered besides chorus."

"And then, what a powerful band!" continued Harry; "I should think there could not have been less than fifty first violins."

"Yes, it is a fine band certainly," was the reply; "but now listen. I was coming up from Southampton a few weeks ago, with an American gentleman, who proved a most agreeable companion; his pleasant and lively conversation was a wonderful balm to the tedium of the journey; amongst other things the forthcoming Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition was mentioned, and I asked his opinion as to its success. 'Success, sir!' he replied, 'it's sure to be that—sure. I guess it'll be about the biggest thing ever produced—and no mistake,' he added, *sotto voce*."

"Ha!" laughed Harry, "the Yankees like big guns."

"Do they?" retorted the Professor; "then all I can say is

that there are a great many English Yankees. It is the taste of the day, my dear fellow; so long as there is a big noise, and the mechanism is not palpably imperfect, folks are satisfied, and it is at once assumed to be a success. Musically or non-musically, it is everywhere the same. Standing armies, cannon, armoured ships, tabernacles, hotels, emporiums, all are tarred with the same big brush; there is a perfect mania for declining the noun *quantitas*. Now I can quite understand that in many cases the spirit of competition, or commercial speculation, will naturally lead to such a course of action—nay, more, that at times it will be even advisable; but I will not allow the wisdom or the right of applying such a principle to the art-creations of genius."

"But, dear friend," said Harry, "I can't see what harm is done by quadrupling, or even increasing twentyfold, the parts of a musical composition; on the contrary, if judiciously multiplied, the effect must be to increase the power."

"And, you would say, in the case of certain heavy choruses, national anthems, marches, &c., to exalt the enthusiasm of the audience by the grandeur of the sheer weight of sound."

"Just so," nodded Harry.

"There are such cases undoubtedly. So far from disputing the power of sound, I regard it as the most wonderful thing in creation; but increase of power by the mere multiplication of the chorus and orchestra will not effect what you desire, or ought to desire, in the representation of an entire work like an oratorio or opera. There must be a *sense of proper proportion*, not only in the balancing of the vocal masses, and of the relative tonal peculiarities of the strings, reed and brass, but also in relation to the solo voices, and therefore (most important of all) to the auditorium. To give anything like an adequate effect in the space requisite for the listening to a chorus and orchestra of three or four thousand, your soloist should have the voice of a Gyges, or the contrast of sound will be like the squeak of a penny whistle after a heavy peal of thunder. To effect the truly sublime demands much study and judgment, while for the ridiculous, *Facilis descensus Averni*."

"You condemn these colossal gatherings then?"

"Not *in toto*, Harry; they are admirable as a means of acquainting great masses of the people with appropriate selections from the great works, and they have their uses in many ways, tending to good without doubt; and after all, if people will have Cyclopean and sensational amusements, they are far better off in listening to such things than in the olden days of Ranelagh and the bear gardens, or in the modern ones when they have collected in tens of thousands to stand agape, with occasional little shrieks of rapture, at the antics of a tom-fool jumping about on a rope eighty feet high."

"Oh, human nature! amazing mass of contradictions; now dubbing a mountebank 'artiste'—anon leaving an artiste (*pur sang*) alone and uncared for, to die of starvation in a garret—capable of such self-abnegation, yet withal so selfish—oftentimes childishly cruel in its amusements, but waking up the next moment to give largely at the call of mercy."

They let him alone for a minute, and then he continued:—

"There is another objection to the Titanic orchestra, that is not perhaps so patent to any but the musician: those accustomed to play in it, unconsciously imbibe a coarseness of tone which, unless counteracted by private practice, or solo or quartet playing, is not easy to lay aside at a moment's notice. Hence, when such a one finds himself in a small orchestra, the refined and expressive portions of the music suffer most grievously. It is indeed difficult to be otherwise, for we are all creatures of habit, and the big school will never train the ear to the delicacy of true beauty. To imagine you are fostering high art by the colossal, is as great a mistake as painting on an ivory tablet with a white-washing brush."

"Fashion does as strange things as that sometimes," remarked Harry.

"Truly, that eccentric dame does make fools of us, as may be seen every day in the streets. A powerful dame is she too, nearly as potent as the 'almighty dollar'; but with all her power and her caprice, which ruin so much and so many, she sometimes meets with her master in true art; for art, the translator of some of the esoteric mysteries of great nature, has a very masculine

trick of forcibly having her own way; indeed, as Lord Dundreary would say, 'ith one of thoth thingth a fellow can't account faw.' Still it is none the less the duty of us who follow art, even in the most humble way, to watch and see that she is worthily treated, and sometimes to speak out, at whatever cost, ever remembering that it is not given to every one to be a Curtius, and that failure is sometimes more honourable than an opposite success. The two senses of sight and hearing are the mediums through which we receive impressions of art. I said just now that a proper sense of proportion, as acting evenly balanced on either side, is necessary to the due and perfect understanding of an entire work of creative art."

"Quite so."

"Now, let us begin with vision. We will take that grand conception, the statue of the Apollo Belvedere. At a certain distance, say four yards, you obtain the right focus, at which the eye can take in and thoroughly understand the beauty, perfection of form, and the vitality (as far as still life can exhibit it) of the figure. Now, let that statue be increased to seven times its size; the looker-on will require a correspondingly increased size of optical sense, or, as the next best thing, an increased distance, to 'lend enchantment to the view.' The first we know is impossible, and the other can only give the general effect of outline, for the little delicacies of manipulation, that are the very soul of creative genius, are perforce lost."

"Have you ever read 'Eöthen'?"

"Ah!" cried the old gentleman, "I know what you would say. You are thinking of that fine chapter on the great Sphinx."

"Yes," replied Harry, "and the impression of wonder and awe stamped, as it seems, indelibly on the mind of the beholder by its vast proportions."

"Not merely by its size, I think," returned the Professor, "for in this special instance it is noted, and agreed upon by all who have seen it, that there is a peculiar expression in the eye, as if looking prophetically into the unfathomable space of futurity; and this is in perfect accordance with the ideas conjured up by the word 'Sphinx,' ever associated as it is with the weird and mysterious. It is one of the minutiae of genius, thrown in, as it were, unconsciously—a veritable 'touch of nature.'"

"True," said Harry, "but the same wonder and awe are produced on travellers by mountain scenery, and that by general outline only, for the minutiae of detail cannot be seen there."

"Pardon me, Harry, you are exceeding the subject somewhat; you are passing from art to nature. Nature is immense, for she deals with unbounded space; art, infinite as she is in her spiritual sense, is, and must be, bounded by our material and finite capacities. Therefore is art justly likened to the hand-maiden of nature, leading us up to the true understanding of her, as she in her turn leads towards God. True, she gives us thunder, earthquake, and terrific noise; and in turn, great, awesome silences; yet in her wondrous chain we find the little playing as important a rôle, and as much cared for, as the great; indeed in many cases the minutiae are even more powerful to the genuinely artistic mind, that recognises how often 'From little causes great events arise.' You instance the effect of the immense in mountain scenery, and yet you have only to recal some of the most famous descriptions of such scenery, and you will invariably find the most loving words bestowed, the most ardent praises given, the most tender recollections awakened, at those moments when the light of the rising sun, or it may be the calm yet searching ray of the moon, traversing athwart those grand, silent hills, rests upon some crevice hitherto unseen, unsuspected, and by its vivifying power discloses to the wondering eye a fertile valley, with little white chalets dotted here and there, or perchance a tiny belting of trees and shrubs, with a few goats or sheep, and other small objects, all distinctly visible; and the heart leaps at the sight of the minutiae of life, thus adding glory to that which before seemed full of glory. Well sang the poet—

"Oh, happy living things! no tongue

Their beauty can declare;

A spring of love gushed from my heart,

And I blessed them unaware."

(To be continued.)

Foreign Correspondence.

MUSIC IN NORTH GERMANY.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

LEIPZIG, June, 1876.

THE first examination concert of the pupils of the Royal Conservatoire, mentioned in our last report, has been followed by four other concerts. The pianoforte performances were by far the best, and we must mention a number of highly-gifted players, ladies as well as gentlemen. Before all, we name Miss Amina Goodwin, from Manchester (thirteen years of age), as being one of the most skilled and talented pianists. She played Hummel's rondo in A major with certainty and firmness, and at the same time with that musical feeling found only in those especially favoured by nature. Although so young, Miss Goodwin has a fine and powerful touch, and all her passages and ornaments, even in the softest *pianissimo*, come out with great distinctness. In fact, the playing of this young lady was in every respect artistic and finished. From this, however, it is not to be inferred that Miss Goodwin is the best pianist at the Leipzig Conservatoire. Although her natural talent is very remarkable, she has much yet to learn. As among the most important and perfect piano performances by ladies, we mention those of Schumann's A minor concerto, by Miss Dora Schirmacher, from Liverpool; the second and third movements from Chopin's E minor concerto, by Fräulein Emma Emery, from Czernowitz; the second and third movements from Beethoven's G major concerto, by Miss Clara Meller, from London; Weber's concert-stück, by Fräulein Martha Isaakson, from Moscow; the first movement from Moscheles' G minor concerto, by Fräulein Ingeborg Ericksen, from Christiania; and lastly, Schumann's A minor concerto, by Fräulein Sophie von Bratkowsky, from Perm (in Russia). The succession in which these names follow each other may at the same time serve as the scale of relative perfection with which they were executed. The performances of Miss Schirmacher and Fräulein Emery were the best. The former, a young lady of about seventeen years, possesses extraordinary talent, and may now be called a pianist of importance. Her playing is simply perfect, and she can take her part in any concert and will certainly satisfy the most severe critics. We may say the same of Fräulein Emery, who also had our entire sympathy. Miss Clara Meller's technique is also excellent, and her playing is distinguished by great delicacy of expression. Whenever Miss Meller and Miss Schirmacher return to England, their playing will prove the justice of our remarks.

The performances of the other ladies were all good, while of those of the gentlemen we think only two worth mentioning, viz., that of Reinecke's F sharp minor concerto, by Herr Albert Eibenschütz, from Frankfurt-on-the-Main, and that of Rubinstein's E flat major concerto (No. 5), by Herr Hermann Zoch, from Züllichau. A most excellent violoncello performance was given by Herr Hermann Heberlein, from Marknenkirchen (andante and first movement from the first concerto by Goltermann), and on the violin (the ballad and polonaise by Vieuxtemps), by Herr Johann Sandström.

Under the direction of Professor Schimon-Regan, our singing-school has made great progress. The interpretation of the following songs afforded us great pleasure at the examination concerts:—The aria, "An jenem Tag," from Marschner's *Hans Heiling*, by Herr Ernst Hunger, from Schoenbach; the recitative and aria, "Crudele," from *Don Juan*, by Fräulein Helene Müller; the recitative and cavatina, "Care Compagne," from *Sonnambula*, by Fräulein Ida Petzold, from Zofingen (Switzerland); and the quintett, "Sento, oh Dio," from *Così fan tutte*, rendered by Mesdames Agnes Türke, from Seehausen, Elise Tetzner, from Saxony, and Messrs. Max Lane, from Newhaven, Hungary, and Alwin Ruffen, from Kamenz.

MUSIC IN VIENNA.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

VIENNA, June 12th, 1876.

AFTER the departure of the Italians the German opera took possession of its own house. The performances began pro-

mislingly; *Don Juan*, *Robert*, *Fidelio*, *Rienzi*, *Zauberflöte*, followed in close succession; a new opera (*Folkunger*) was promised, as also the *Gastspiel* of the celebrated Wagner-singer, Herr Niemann. But soon a change came o'er the scene; Niemann found it inconvenient to sing just before the musical battle in Bayreuth, and the direction came to the conclusion that it would not be wise to bring out a new work just in the middle of the hottest weather. Meantime three singers, the ladies Ehnn, Dillner, and Kupfer-Berger, took their holidays; the director, Herr Jauner, went to Paris and London to look out for new resources for the future; and so it happened that the ballet became a help in trouble; twice every week the Opera-house was closed; and the programme of operas became more and more uninteresting. And now the situation has become still more critical, as Frau Materna, one of the pillars of our opera, has also gone to assist at the Court in Bayreuth. Frau Wilt remains as first singer, assisted by one or two ladies of a lower grade. The choice of operas, in spite of four tenors, is therefore dictated by the want of forces, and cannot be regarded in an artistic view. Otherwise, to mention no other reasons, the performance of four Italian operas so shortly after the close of the Italian campaign would be incomprehensible. (A fifth, *L'Elisir d'Amore*, is over and above promised for next week.)

Another opera, *Des Teufels Antheil* (*La Part du Diable*), could be regarded beforehand as a failure, as our great Opera-house is not the place for comic operas of such a kind, and as the necessary singers and actors for such a task were wanting. After a series of poor performances, only one opera, *Aida*, was able to attract a larger audience; Frau Materna, as Amneris, performed for the last time before her departure. To fill up the gaps, two *Gastspiele* took place: Frl. Thomas Börs, from Schwerin, performed the parts of Alice, Pamina, and Agathe; Frl. Bretfeld, from Hamburg, those of Margarethe and Carlo Broschi. The former will be a good acquisition for a smaller house; the latter, a gifted singer, made again, as two years ago, a good impression. The ballet also boasted of a guest, Frl. Grantzow, from Berlin. The famous ballerina performed on six evenings, and enchanted the audience by her poetical rendering of every rôle.

The operas represented from May 4th to June 12th have been—*Don Juan*, *Robert der Teufel*, *Fidelio*, *Stumme von Portici* (twice), *Rienzi*, *Zauberflöte*, *Judith* (twice), *Heruani* (three times), *Freischütz*, *Faust*, *Rigoletto*, *Hugenotten*, *Troubadour*, *Afrikanerin*, *Des Teufels Antheil* (twice), *Aida*, *Dinorah*, *Lucrezia Borgia*.

Reviews.

Gradus ad Parnassum. By MUZIO CLEMENTI. A selection of Studies, revised and fingered, with marks of expression and directions as to the proper mode of practising them, by CARL TAUSIG. Augener & Co.

IT will probably be a surprise as well as reassuring to those who have looked upon the term "higher development," of which the late Carl Tausig was the originator, as such a bugbear, to learn that before his death he edited a selection of studies from so old-fashioned and well-established a work as Clementi's "Gradus ad Parnassum," with the *imprimatur* that in his opinion Clementi and Chopin alone have provided studies in the true sense of the word which perfectly fulfil their intention. This is sufficiently explained, in the preface affixed to his selection by G. F. Weitzmann, by the assertion, which none will question, that each of these studies of Clementi's represents a distinct figure—whether by running and undulating passages, broken chords, purposely-arranged difficulties, and other *motifs* intended to make the fingers independent of each other, or to promote the freedom, ability, and sustaining power of the performer in various ways, by the change of position and by modulation throughout the whole piece. Thus regarded, these studies will enable the pupil, who can play them with correctness and facility, to execute with ease similar passages occurring in the works of other masters, and especially to attain the necessary precision, clearness, and freedom for the performance of any kind of musical composition. It was Tausig's habit to make use of them before all others in the school for the higher development of pianoforte-playing of which

he was the head, as well as for his own practice. Further, he asserted that by means of these studies Clementi made known and accessible to every student the entire pianoforte literature, from S. Bach, who doubtless requires peculiar practice, to Beethoven, just as Chopin has also done from the latter to Liszt, in whose compositions musical art has attained to a dazzling height. For making a selection from Clementi's "Gradus ad Parnassum," or "The Art of Playing the Piano taught by a Hundred Examples," Herr Tausig had ample excuse from the fact that many a young student has been alarmed at the vast number of exercises contained in the work, which, in its original form includes not only frequent repetitions of similar passages, modes of execution, and mannerisms, but to some extent also compositions unsuited to the taste of the present time. It has therefore been his aim to make choice of those most practical and improving studies from the "Gradus," which are intended to overcome the greatest variety of difficulties, and at the same time he has arranged them progressively, and with several different readings for fingering and execution, thus undoubtedly rendering the work suitable to the requirements of our day. He has only altered the original fingering in those passages where it no longer tallies with the views at present entertained respecting this branch of pianoforte technique, or where the choice of fingering adopted is better calculated to strengthen the naturally weak fingers of both hands, to aid in practising the passing of the different fingers and thumb over and under each other, and in giving the hand a wider grasp, &c.

Clementi has proved by this, his greatest work, that there were giants in the land of pianism even before the days of Chopin and Liszt. Not a word more need be said in commendation of a work which has met with approbation from every school of thought in the pianistic world; but for this judiciously-made selection from it we should be grateful, not only to the genius and experience of the late Herr Tausig, but also to the publishers, who, by issuing an edition of it with English fingering and with a translation of Tausig's directions for practising it, have made it accessible to English students.

Adelaide (Lied von L. van Beethoven). *Elegie* (Violin Solo von H. W. Ernst). Transcriptionen für Pianoforte von GUSTAV LANGE. Op. 241, Nos. 1 & 2. Offenbach: Joh. André.

IN Breitkopf and Härtel's thematic catalogue of Beethoven's works, edited by G. Nottebohm, no less than fifteen different arrangements for pianoforte of Beethoven's celebrated song, "Adelaide," are enumerated as having been published prior to 1868. We, therefore, cannot see what real cause there was for another, except upon the ground that every publisher finds it pay to have his own edition of so popular a work. "Adelaide" is here arranged in a very playable manner, but the position of Beethoven's chords, as well as the chords themselves, have unnecessarily been subjected to too frequent alteration. The melody appears as the upper part. Being a song for a tenor voice, it would have gained in interest as a transcription if the cantilena had been retained in its proper register. But this perhaps would have too much exercised the arranger's ingenuity, and would have made it more difficult to play, and consequently less saleable.

Ernst's "Elegie" is probably as great a favourite with violinists as "Adelaide" is with vocalists. As here arranged it makes a very much better pianoforte piece than one would have anticipated. To many it will doubtless serve to recall the pleasurable sensations experienced in listening to its performance by some great violinist. As a study towards reproducing upon the piano as nearly as possible the sustained tone and impassioned manner of an accomplished violinist, it will be found as attractive and salutary, as it is pleasing as a piece for pianoforte.

"Vive La Garde." *Chant Militaire pour le Piano*, par EDOUARD DORN. Augener & Co.

THOUGH commencing precisely as does the well-known song, "Hark! the vesper hymn is stealing," and presenting obvious

reminiscences of more than one other old favourite, there is a decided "go" about this piece which cannot fail to recommend it. The opening march theme (in \sharp flat) is well-marked and tuneful; in the following section the effect of fifes and drums is capably reproduced. The trio (in A flat) has the regulation *cantabile* character; the embroidery of small notes with which on its re-occurrence it is allied, imparts to it a brilliancy in effect far in excess of its apparent difficulty. Though to be classed under the head of "drawing-room" music, this new piece of M. Dorn's would be sure to rouse the enthusiasm of a "ballad", concert audience.

Air de Ballet, Mouvement de Danse, à la Gavotte, composé pour le Piano par FLORIAN PASCAL. London: Joseph Williams.

IN a lecture recently delivered by him at the Alexandra Palace, Mr. Lindsay Sloper remarked:—"Composers have not all philosophy enough to live to write, they must write to live, and to do this their works must sell. Publishers will tell you that it is of little use to offer to their customers works which are difficult to play or to read; and they must all be cast in the same mould. A very distinguished foreign writer told me many years ago that a London publisher having commissioned him to write six piano-forte pieces, called on him the next day with a parcel of compositions (save the mark!) by one of the most popular writers of the day, saying, 'I want you to write me something like this.' The bundle of music found its way speedily down-stairs, and the publisher followed very shortly after." The "Air de Ballet," by Florian Pascal, brings the above amusing anecdote of Mr. Lindsay Sloper to our mind; one readily imagines that it must have been written under somewhat similar conditions, and with some regret that its composer had not the strength of mind to follow the example of the hero of Mr. Lindsay Sloper's anecdote. Though by no means without charm, and neatly written, except in one or two instances where consecutive octaves occur, and in the last two chords in which the third is wanting, this little piece unmistakably owes its existence to Henri Ghys's transcription of the "Air du Roi Louis XIII.," of which it is one of many imitations. By those who are not in a position to recognise the plagiarism it will be hailed as a pretty drawing-room piece.

First Steps in Organ-playing. By SCOTSON CLARK. Augener & Co.

As we learn from the preface, this new organ "tutor" is intended to supply the long-felt want of a really elementary method for the organ, which does not assume a competent knowledge of the pianoforte on the part of the pupil. Relying upon the fact of his experience that long and abstruse "Methods" or "Schools" are very rarely waded through, it has evidently been Mr. Clark's aim to provide a method which shall be as comprehensive as is compatible with brevity. Rightly enough Mr. Clark maintains that "the first and most important thing in the study of the organ is a good knowledge of, and a thorough mastery over, the key-board." That we so seldom hear the organ properly played, Mr. Clark attributes to the fact that "too many students lose sight of this most important fact, and while they become good pedalists, and acquire a fair knowledge of the stops and the various ways in which they may be combined, they leave the hands to take care of themselves." Many will probably deny that this has been their experience, and will maintain that indifferent organ-playing more often arises from insufficient command over the pedals. Mr. Clark being of a different way of thinking sufficiently accounts for the preponderance of manual over pedal exercises given by him in this book. Thus we find ten pages of elementary finger exercises and short preludes against but two and a half pages of pedal exercises. These are followed by half a dozen short exercises for pedals and manuals combined, together with illustrations of the manner of rendering chants—first without and then with pedals. A couple of chorales with pedal *obbligato* bring the student to the last of his "first steps." It will be consoling to the beginner to learn from Mr. Clark that "some of the most able and successful organists now holding appointments in England, America, and the Colonies, gained their proficiency mainly by the careful study of exercises similar

to those contained in the first part of this work." Part II., which is rather to be regarded as an appendage than as part and parcel of "First Steps," and which takes up considerably more than half the volume, consists of a selection of organ music in various styles. It includes a couple of Bach's shorter fugues; a chorus of Handel's arranged by E. Prout; an *andante cantabile* by W. Rea; an *offertoire* by Lefébure-Wely; and several compositions by Scotson Clark. Though in this selection the student has got beyond his "first steps," we cannot but think that some addition of "fingering" and "footing," which might be easily made in a second edition, would conduce greatly to the value of this part of Mr. Clark's work.

SONGS.

Piping down the valleys wild, and Infant Joy, by M. G. CARMICHAEL (Stanley Lucas, Weber, & Co.), as regards the words, are both taken from William Blake's "Songs of Innocence." Their appearance simultaneously with the much talked-of exhibition of paintings by William Blake, painter and poet, seems very opportune. Both words and music have all the delicacy of a miniature, and are aptly united. The pastoral colouring which pervades the first, though slightly reminiscent of the last movement of Beethoven's "Sonate Pastorale," is admirably maintained. The only exception that can be taken to its construction is the admission of a ritornel of four bars between the lines, "On a cloud I saw a child, and he laughing said to me," and "Pipe a song about a lamb," &c.—a mode of procedure which seems to make an uncalled-for break in the continuity of the narration of the verse. Apart from this objection, which after all is almost hypercritical, we regard these new settings of Blake's charming lines as peculiarly happy, and look forward with pleasure to their being followed by others of the series.

A Winter Song, by ALEX. S. BEAUMONT (Augener & Co.), has already been spoken of in these columns with approbation. It is, therefore, only necessary to add that editions of it have since been published with an *ad libitum* accompaniment for violin or violoncello.

From far away, by ARTHUR HERVEY (Evans & Co.), simple and unpretentious as it is, is full of feeling, and conceived in a musicianly manner, as the points of imitation in the accompaniment, obviously suggested by the voice part, but so smoothly and naturally introduced, sufficiently prove.

The Flower of Strathmore, by ALFRED STELLA (Edinburgh: Paterson & Sons), has an unmistakable Scotch flavour, and consequently little originality. Though smoothly and pleasingly written, it is hardly of a sufficiently individual character to meet with acceptance as a national song.

The Ruined Castle, by MARGUERITE (Lamborn Cock). Here is the old story of unrequited love represented by a castle in the air. The music to which it is allied being of a tuneful, vocal, and flowing character, and the accompaniment easy of execution, it will probably meet with many admirers among the unthinking. That the music has altogether been suggested by the sentiment of the words cannot be said. After a well-designed passage (page 4, bar 8, *et seq.*) which fairly represents the despair felt in the disappearance of a castle which seemed so fair, it is disappointing to find the same musical phrase doing duty for the words "With fairy vision hope has fled, and left a heart in ruins dead!" as in the former verse was allied to so different a sentiment as expressed by the words, "With stately walls and turrets high, it seemed to touch the summer sky." To expect the singer to give due expression to two such opposite ideas in conjunction with the same music is asking too much. The moral seems to be that composers of vocal music should not tie themselves down too closely to musical form.

The Moustrooper's Ride, by HENRY SMART (Cramer & Co.), is a vigorous song for baritone, with a "galloping" accompaniment. Though not strikingly original, it abounds with the artistic touches of a well-versed musician. In the hands of a competent singer, say Mr. Santley, it would be sure to please. Its spirited character can hardly fail to recommend it to baritones who command sufficient volubility to give it its due effect.

One by One, by J. C. BAYLEY (Cramer & Co.), is a song of

a semi-religious character, which the provision of an *ad libitum* accompaniment for harmonium helps to maintain, and which will probably be regarded as its most attractive feature.

Polly Vanderdecken, by E. SILAS (Novello & Co.), with its hurdy-gurdy-like ritornels and generally quaint and piquant character, bespeaks both humour and refinement, as well as musicianly skill, on the part of its composer.

The Bridge, by HENRI HARTOG (Augener & Co.). This setting of Longfellow's poem is, as Germans would describe it, "durchcomponirt," that is to say, each stanza has its own peculiar music. We know of no English equivalent for this expression, which says so much in a single word. Though its composer has taken the trouble to treat it in this way, except in the stanza in which a flood of thought is likened to rushings waters, we can trace but little connection between words and music. Indeed the music to which are allied the lines—

"My heart was hot and restless,
And my heart was full of care;
And the burden laid upon me
Seemed greater than I could bear,"

appears to us to breathe of the utmost content. Though we so rarely meet with English songs which owe their music to the words, except so far as metre is concerned, the objection is one not lightly to be passed over. In other respects there is much to commend in this melodious, smoothly-flowing, and musicianly setting of M. Hartog's.

Dear Home again, and *Maritana, gay Gitana*, by W. C. LEVEY (Ashdown & Parry). Both these songs have the music-hall stamp upon them. "Dear Home" has the common hackneyed accompaniment that means nothing, and to which any words might be sung with equal propriety. "Maritana" is perhaps a shade more vulgar, but yet has more individuality, inasmuch as the accompaniment has a true gipsy ring about it, and a certain liveliness that may recommend it to some.

The Angel at the Window, by BERTHOLD TOURS (Ashdown & Parry). The music of this curious song is *pretty and nice*—two words distinctly suitable to it. But what, in the name of all that is mysterious, do the words mean? Apparently that the lover shut the window to prevent his sick love taking cold and dying, and, afterwards repenting the action, opened it wide and thankfully let his beloved meet her death, being satisfied that it was better she should depart, and that he was foolish not to have allowed her to do so sooner.

Concerts, &c.

PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.

Two works of symphonic dimensions were brought forward at the sixth concert. We allude to Beethoven's violin concerto, and Rubinstein's "Dramatic" symphony, which, but for the pause consequent upon the one closing the first part and the other opening the second part of the programme, were in close juxtaposition. M. Wieniawski was the exponent of Beethoven's concerto, of which, though it lacked some of Professor Joachim's wondrous breadth of expression, he gave a very brilliant rendering, which was conducive of unmixed pleasure to the audience generally. The introduction of Herr Rubinstein's latest symphony was a graceful act on the part of the directors, as a compliment to him as our guest, and in recognition of his services at a former concert. By the majority of the audience the hour expended upon its performance seemed to be regarded rather as an infliction. A grand opportunity of replenishing the by no means overflowing coffers of the Society, by enlisting the composer's services to conduct it, was unfortunately overlooked. Herr Rubinstein makes it his practice to conduct without a score before him, and his appearance in this capacity is consequently as imposing as that of his playing. Had it been made public that he would conduct his symphony himself, doubtless as many would have been attracted to see him conduct as have been to see and hear him play. As it was, but little curiosity was manifested respecting his symphony, and the audience was not more numerous than usual. Another advantage, too, would have been that Mr. Cusins would have got rid of all responsibility in respect to its performance, and we should not have heard it said that it was quite a different thing when conducted by the composer himself in Leipzig. Under these circumstances, and without any clue to its intentions being given beyond that suggested by its title, "Dramatic," it would be rash to

venture upon a decided opinion as to its merits, beyond stating that it is a highly ambitious work, and may at least claim the merit of excellence of instrumentation, but, as a whole, failed to impress us pleasantly on a first hearing. The remaining orchestral works were the overtures to Spohr's *Jessonda* and Rossini's *William Tell*. The vocalists were Miss Marie Duval and Mr. W. G. Cummings. The lady, a promising student of the Royal Academy of Music, was heard in the aria "Batti, batti," from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, and in a couple of songs by Mendelssohn and Sterndale Bennett. The gentleman came forward with the cavatina, "Ah se de' preghi miei," from Gounod's *Mirella*, and the serenade, "When the orb of day reposing," from Weber's *Euryanthe*.

The introduction to Wagner's *Lohengrin*, which opened the seventh concert, met with a hearty encore, to which it was well that Mr. Cusins acceded, if for no other reason than that it was played the first time while the audience were still assembling. An overture to *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (MS.), by the late Sir W. Sterndale Bennett, composed by him at the age of eighteen, while he was still a student at the Royal Academy of Music, was heard at these concerts for the first time. It was first heard in public in June, 1834, at a concert of the Società della Concordia, an institution under the direction of one Gusualdo Lanza, a notable singing-master of that day, and was subsequently four times performed at concerts of the Society of British Musicians between December 8th, 1834, and February 18th, 1839. On listening to it for the first time on the present occasion, one felt as much surprise that a work which abounds with so much charm, though it may lack the individuality and perfection of some of Bennett's later productions, should not again have been brought to a hearing during its author's lifetime, as that his executors should have kept it back for a year and a half after his death. Mlle. Anna Mehlig, to our thinking the best lady pianist after Mme. Schumann that we have heard of late years, gave a fine and vigorous reading of Beethoven's concerto in E flat, No. 5. The remaining orchestral works were Mozart's "Jupiter" symphony, and the overture to Gounod's *Mirella*. Mlle. Thekla Friedlaender and Mr. Santley were the vocalists. The former, who it must be averred shines more as a *Lied* singer than in operatic excerpts, was heard only in the aria "Zeffiretti lusinghieri," from Mozart's *Idomeneo*; and the latter in Gounod's sacred song, "There is a green hill," Mendelssohn's "Shepherd's Lay," and Hatton's "To Anthea." Little as we care for Gounod's overwrought and hackneyed setting of a childlike song, it must be averred that we have never heard it more finely rendered than by Mr. Santley.

The second and last of the recently instituted morning concerts commenced with Haydn's symphony in C, announced in one programme as "The Bear," but in another with more correctness, we think, as "La Danse des Ours." In the programme-book Professor Macfarren points to the repeated minims, each with a short note before it, with which the finale opens, as a clue to the title of the work. "If this," he says, "is to be taken for the growling of the mother bear, we have not far to look for the answering cries of her cubs, when the acuter instruments take up the bass point, the chief theme of the movement being played below it." That this symphony took its title from the fact that the finale was intended to represent the hurdy-gurdy-like tunes which accompanied the bear-dances, which must have been common in the streets of London in Haydn's day, and which Professor Macfarren can probably recall, seems to us a far more plausible proposition. We look, however, to Herr C. F. Pohl to clear up this, as well as all other matters connected with Haydn, in his biography of this master which is now in course of issue. Herr A. Jaell, justly an old favourite among the pianists who for many years past have regularly visited us at this season, was heard in Schumann's concerto in A minor, Op. 54, but hardly, we thought, to such great advantage as on some previous occasions. M. Lasserre, one of the most eminent of our resident violoncellists, found ample opportunity for displaying his skill as a *virtuoso* in a concerto in D minor (Op. 30, No. 2) by G. Goltermann, a work distinguished by its happy fitness for the violoncello rather than by its intrinsic merits as a composition. Mr. W. G. Cusins's well-designed and tunefully pleasing concert overture, suggested by Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost*, and that composed by Beethoven as a prelude to his music to Goethe's *Egmont*, completed the instrumental selection. Mlle. Chapuy, of Her Majesty's Opera, was to have been the vocalist, but falling ill, Mlle. Varesi was engaged in her place. At the last moment a medical certificate was also put in on her behalf; so it came about that Mlle. Redeker appeared as the sole representative of vocal art. Mlle. Redeker, who was heard here for the first time, is the possessor of a contralto voice of unusual power and extent, ranging, as she proved on this occasion, from E below the lines to G sharp above. By her tasteful and intelligent rendering of Schubert's "Wanderer" and Klengel's "Dornröschen," accompanied on the pianoforte by Mr. Cusins, she made so

favourable an impression, that, if she remains here, she can hardly fail to take a high position as a vocalist.

CRYSTAL PALACE.

THE introduction of Sophocles' tragedy, *Edipus at Colonus*, with Mendelssohn's music, in the Opera Theatre of the Crystal Palace, for the first time on the English stage, on Tuesday the 13th ult., fully testified to a laudable desire on the part of the directors not to lose sight of the classical, and to combine instruction and intellectual culture with the lighter amusements provided by them. Witnessing this representation, which was repeated on the following Saturday, led to the same reflections as were suggested by the revival of its sequel, *Antigone*, in the same place in December last. The same incongruity of intermingling spoken dialogue with choral singing was even more apparent than in *Antigone*, and tended to confirm us in our idea that, thoroughly beautiful as is much of the music supplied by Mendelssohn, its composition cannot be otherwise regarded than as based upon an artistic mistake. One wishes for either more or less. Apart from the music, with which it so ill agrees, no educated person could listen with satisfaction to the late Mr. Bartholomew's pitiful English version. The absence of uniformity on the part of the actors in their pronunciation of the Greek names, which with a little care might so easily have been amended, must have been an ear-sore to many a schoolboy. The *dramatis personæ* were filled by Mr. Hermann Vezin (*Edipus*), Mr. Edmund Leathes (*Theuseus*), Mr. Henry Moxon (*Creon*), Mr. Arthur Matthison (*a Colonean*), Mr. Noel (Polynices), Miss Emily Vining (*Ismene*), and Miss Genevieve Warde (*Antigone*). Good service was done by the band and an amateur chorus of forty male voices, who had been well drilled by Mr. W. Gadsby, but the difficulty which Mr. Manns experienced in keeping all together was but too often apparent. This, no doubt, in part arose from the unaccustomed and disagreeable position in which the amateurs found themselves. Having to face the heat and glare of stage footlights for nearly two hours on a summer's afternoon could indeed have been no joke.

MME. SAINTON-DOLBY'S CONCERT.

THE all-absorbing interest of this lady's concert, which was given with full band and chorus under the direction of M. Sainton at St. James's Hall, centred in the production of a cantata, *The Legend of St. Dorothea*, of her own composition. The text is based on the well-known legend of the martyr and saint, who, on being called to suffer for the faith, asserted the joy she felt at the prospect of being received into her Saviour's garden of everlasting flowers and fruits, and on jeeringly being asked by a young lawyer, Theophilus, to send him some of these wondrous flowers and fruits, promised to comply with his request. After the saint's death an angel appears to Theophilus, bringing him flowers and fruits; he is converted to Christianity by the miracle, and suffers martyrdom. Mme. Sainton-Dolby's music is just what one would expect from a lady composer, who, as a vocalist, has had such ample opportunities of studying the requirements of an audience. Though lacking originality, never aiming very high, or ambitiously scholastic, it is almost always fluent and tunelessly melodious, and often highly effective. The voice parts, whether in the solos or in the concerted pieces, are laid out with admirable skill, but what strikes one most is the excellence of the instrumentation. Space fails us to speak in detail of the twenty-nine numbers of which the work consists; it must suffice, therefore, to state that the performance—in which the principal parts were sustained by Miss Julia Wigan and Miss Adela Vernon (in the place of Mme. Lemmens-Sherrington, who was debarred from appearing by a severe domestic affliction), Mme. Patey, Mr. E. Lloyd, Mr. Gordon Gooch, and Mr. Lewis Thomas—was, on the whole, a very satisfactory one. At the close of the performance, which was frequently interrupted by applause, there were loud calls for the composer, whom many must have been glad to see again on the orchestra, though with regret that her singing days are over. Though hardly up to the mark of a Birmingham Festival, *The Legend of St. Dorothea*, which has been published in a cheap form by Messrs. Enoch and Sons, will probably prove an acceptable boon to amateur choral societies on the look-out for something new and practicable.

NATIONAL ACADEMY FOR THE HIGHER DEVELOPMENT OF PIANOFORTE PLAYING.

EXCEPTION having been taken in certain quarters to the term "higher development," not only on its own account, but in reference to its application to this Institution, of which Mr. Franklin Taylor is

the president, and Mr. Oscar Beringer the director, it seems well, though we cannot regard the term as a very happy one, to explain that it originated with the late Carl Tausig, who founded an academy of pianoforte-playing at Berlin, which he entitled "Schule des höheren Klavierspiels." On opening an institution modelled on a similar basis, it seems not unreasonable that Mr. Beringer, formerly a pupil of Tausig, should have adopted a literal translation of the term employed by him for its distinctive title, partly perhaps from regard to the memory of his deceased master. Like the "music of the future," the term "higher development" has given rise to a good deal of misunderstanding, and has too frequently been used in an opprobrious sense. Reference to the programme of the second concert given by the students of the above-named Institution, in which there are now between sixty and seventy pupils under instruction, shows that the term need not be regarded as suggestive of anything very terrible. It was as follows:—

1. SONATA FOR PIANOFORTE AND VIOLIN in F, Op. 8 Grieg.
2. PARTITA, No. 1, in B flat Messrs. WARD and FRANK.
3. a, Prelude; b, Sarabande; c, Minuet; d, Gigue. Bach.
4. ANDANTE AND FINALE FROM CONCERTO in G minor Miss CHEVNE.
5. 32 VARIATIONS in C minor Miss STOCKEN.
6. RONDO in E flat, Op. 62 Miss PETTIFER.
7. CARNEVAL DE VIENNE, Op. 26 (No. 1) Mr. TH. BROWN.
8. ETUDES D'APRES PAGANINI (No. 6, Variations) Miss RANDOLPH.
9. POLONAISE in A flat, Op. 53 Miss M. G. CARMICHAEL.
10. DUO FOR 2 PIANOS (8 hands), "Les Contrastes" Miss EMILY TATE.

To so high-class a selection no exception could possibly be taken. Of the manner in which the task of rendering it was executed, it may fairly be said that it not only betokened the possession of talent in no small degree on the part of the executants, but also conclusively proved the soundness of the instruction which had been imparted to them. Such periodical exhibitions of students' work, we think, should be regarded as the best lesson, at least in gaining confidence, that they probably receive in the course of the whole year, rather than as provocative of detailed criticism.

MR. J. B. WELCH'S CONCERT.

THE programme of the third annual concert given by this much-sought-after professor of vocal art was, to a great extent, a notable exception to the general rule that singing-masters' concerts are usually lacking in interest from a musical point of view. It commenced with the contralto solo (Mrs. Bradshaw-Mackay) and chorus from the second act of Gluck's *Orfeo*, the performance of which, under Mr. Welch's direction, by its precise and refined character, at once gave unmistakable evidence of the careful drilling to which the choir had been subjected. The most interesting feature of the selection was the introduction for the first time in London of an English version, supplied by Miss Constance Bache, of Schumann's "Spanische Liebes-Lieder," Op. 138 (Spanish Love-Songs), in the rendering of which Miss Kathleen Grant, Mrs. Bradshaw-Mackay, Mr. David Strong, and Mr. T. Ainsworth, severally took part; the pianoforte accompaniment, as originally written for four hands, being sustained by Messrs. Wilfred Bendall and J. B. Zerbini. This strikingly charming work of Schumann's consists of an instrumental prelude, an interlude in the form of a national dance, and eight vocal numbers, viz.:—Four songs, a romance, two duets, and a quartett. So admirable a work should be frequently heard at concerts where vocal music predominates, and where good taste is aimed at. Scarcely less acceptable, though of less importance, was the introduction, also for the first time in English, of a couple of Volkslieder, arranged as part-songs by J. Brahms, under the titles, "In silent night," and "Parting Song." Both were so pleasing, and were so capably rendered by Mr. Welch's pupil-choir, as to provoke an encore for the second. The remainder of the programme, in which the popular element and the royalty system were fully maintained by Messrs. E. Lloyd and Santley, was of a more miscellaneous character. Mr. Walter Bache contributed three pianoforte solos by Liszt; Mrs. Cunah and Mr. Lindsay Sloper performed a duet for two pianofortes by Lysberg; and there were still to be heard songs sung by Miss Anna Williams. Miss Coyte Turner, and Mr. Edward Wharton.

MUSICAL UNION MATINEES.

THE fourth matinee was a notable one, as being the last at which Sig. Papini was to appear, and the only one for which Herr Rubin

stein was engaged. Sig. Papini may now fairly be regarded as an established favourite of Professor Ella's patrons, who took leave of him with evident regret. Herr Rubinstein, who of late has turned the heads of so many, attracted an unusually numerous audience on this his farewell appearance. The concerted works for strings were Haydn's quartett in C, No. 77, introducing the famous variations on the well-known Austrian hymn, "God preserve the Emperor," and the andante and scherzo from Mendelssohn's unfinished posthumous quartett in E, Op. 81, both of which were carefully played. It was, however, to hear Rubinstein that the majority of the audience had evidently come together. He appeared to the best advantage, with MM. Papini and Lasserre, in Beethoven's grand trio in D, Op. 70. At the close of the matinée he gave what amounted to a "recital" on a small scale, by playing a series of pianoforte pieces, but in all of which he had been heard here on previous occasions in former years, and in most of them at his late "recitals." The list included Chopin's berceuse, Op. 57, and polonaise in A major—his rendering of which was as delicate and charming in the case of the one, as it was hard and boisterous in that of the other—Liszt's wondrous transcription of Schubert's "Erlkönig"—with which he fairly electrified his audience—and of his own compositions, the berceuse in F, from Op. 26, a caprice in E flat, and his arrangement of the march from Beethoven's *Ruins of Athens*.

At the fifth matinée two other old favourites of Professor Ella, and we doubt not, also of his subscribers, made their re-entry in the persons of Herr Auer, as leading violinist, and M. Duvernoy, as pianist. The concerted works, which owing to an accident could not be given in the order announced, included Beethoven's string quartett in E minor, Op. 59; Schumann's now well-known pianoforte quartett in E flat, Op. 37; and Mendelssohn's duo in D, Op. 58, for pianoforte and violoncello. Solos were further contributed by Herr Auer and M. Duvernoy; the former making choice of an andante and scherzando from a set of five pieces by M. Lalo, and the latter of Chopin's nocturne in G minor, and a caprice in F of his own.

Herr A. Jaell, whose annual visit is always especially welcome, as much for his merits as an executant as for the fact that he almost invariably insists upon being heard in some new work of interest and importance, was the pianist at the following matinée. Having been the first here on former occasions to introduce Brahms's two earlier pianoforte quartetts, Op. 25 and Op. 26, which may fairly now be regarded as established favourites, it was but natural and right that he should follow them up with the same composer's latest work of this class, viz., his quartett in C minor, Op. 60. We spoke of this on the occasion of its being performed for the first time at one of Mr. Coenen's concerts of last winter. A further hearing of it confirmed the impression it then made, that, though less taking at first than either of its companions, it grows in estimation as it becomes the more familiar. But the beauty of the slow movement and the taking qualities of the finale at once assert themselves. The concerted works for strings, led by Herr Auer, were Mozart's quintett in D, and Beethoven's quartett in C minor, Op. 18, No. 4. For his solos, which he gave with immense charm and feeling, Herr Jaell made choice of the lovely aria from Schumann's sonata in F sharp minor, Op. 11; an étude de concert in A flat, Op. 139, by Stephen Heller; and Chopin's valse in A flat, Op. 42. On being recalled he gave in addition his own very pleasing "Canzonetta Veneziana."

HERR HERMANN FRANKE'S CONCERT.

HERR HERMANN FRANKE, who has been resident among us for a year past or more, by his playing at a concert given by him on the 1st ult., gave ample proof of his excellence as a violinist as well as of his good taste, as was instanced by the interesting and admirable selection of works brought forward. For his solos (with pianoforte accompaniment) he made choice of Tartini's sonata in G minor, and the adagio and allegro from a violin concerto by Reinhold Becker, a work now publicly performed in London for the first time, and a hearing of which certainly induced the desire to become more nearly acquainted with its composer, who appears to have turned certain Wagnerian leanings to good account in this concerto, which it is to be hoped Herr Franke will soon find an opportunity of performing in its entirety, and with an orchestra. With Herr Kummer, also a violinist of high excellence, he was heard in Bach's concerto in D minor for two violins, and with the Herren Barth, Speilmann, and Daubert, in Brahms's quartett in G minor, Op. 25. By no means the least interesting feature in Herr Franke's concert was the opportunity accorded of again listening to the pianoforte-playing of Herr Heinrich Barth, whose rendering of Henselt's enormously difficult concerto at a recent concert of the Philharmonic Society made so profound an impression. His fine rendering of a series of solos by Schumann (*Nachtstück*, Op. 23, No. 3), Brahms (*Ballade*, Op. 10,

No. 2), Chopin (*Scherzo*, Op. 35), and Rheinberger (*Fugue*, Op. 5), together with the excellent service he did at the pianoforte in the above-named concerted pieces, went far to confirm the good opinion we had formed of his powers as a pianist. We learn with pleasure that it is his intention to repeat his visit to us during the next winter season, having already been secured by Mr. S. Arthur Chappell for the Monday Popular Concerts. Songs by Franck (1648), Felix Semon, Benedict, Brahms, and Rubinstein, were contributed by Mlle. Thekla Friedlaender, Mlle. Redecker, Mme. Anna Samson, and Herr Werrenrath.

THE St. Matthew's Choral Society, Brixton, concluded its fourth season on May 30th by giving a concert at the schools in Church Road, Brixton, under the direction of Mr. George Shinn. The vocalists were Miss Agnes Larkcom, Miss Adelaide Bliss, Mr. Alfred Pitman, and Mr. R. Pakeman. Mr. S. Fisher and Mr. J. B. Gaunt played the accompaniments. The programme included the first chorus from Mr. Ebenezer Prout's *Magnificat* in C, a selection from Mendelssohn's *Lauda Sion*, and a variety of songs, part-songs, &c.

A MUSICAL competition or "Bee" was held on the 13th ult., in the Public Hall, Erith, under the superintendence of Mr. Richard Lemaire. There were eight different classes for competitors, including examinations in harmony, singing and playing at sight, &c., and a valuable collection of prizes, comprising volumes of classical music, was distributed. The judges were Messrs. W. Hoyte, Warwick Jordan, and Richard Lemaire.

Musical Notes.

MESSRS. NOVELLO, EWER, and Co. invite subscriptions for a complete edition of Purcell's works, to be published under the auspices of the Purcell Society, which was founded on Monday, February 21st, 1876, for the purpose of doing justice to the memory of Henry Purcell—firstly, by the publication of his works, most of which exist only in manuscript; and secondly, by meeting for the study and performance of his various compositions. Persons desirous of becoming members of the Society are requested to forward their names to the Hon. Sec., Alfred H. Littleton, Esq., 1, Berners Street, W.

It is satisfactory to learn from the recently-issued twenty-sixth annual report of the committee of management of the Choir Benevolent Fund—the design of which is to secure a provision for aged or invalided members thereof; to guarantee a fixed sum, payable at the decease of members, to their widows or children; and also to afford to the said widows and children temporary assistance in time of need or affliction—that during an existence of twenty-five years it has steadily increased in vigour and usefulness. On the other hand, it is disappointing to hear that the festival held in Westminster Abbey, on the 8th of December last, resulted in a pecuniary loss.

GREAT preparations are being made for the Fine Art and Industrial Exhibition, to be opened at Wrexham on the 22nd inst., when the Duke of Westminster has consented to preside at the inaugural ceremony. The musical arrangements, which include fortnightly grand concerts, for which De Jong's famous band has been engaged, have been entrusted to Mr. John Thomas, harpist to Her Majesty. An organ on an extensive scale, consisting of five claviars, fifty stops, and 2,500 pipes, is being erected by Messrs. Gray and Davison. Mr. Edwin Harris, organist of St. Mark's, Wrexham, and of St. Mary's, Bersham, has been engaged to give two recitals daily during the three months that the exhibition remains open. The Welsh Eisteddfod and Musical Festival, at Wrexham, is fixed for August 23rd and three following days.

MR. CH. J. BISHENDEN wishes it to be known that he has just been presented by the inhabitants of his native town, Hemel Hempstead, with a musical scholarship and a handsome ivory bâton, mounted in solid silver.

AMERICAN papers state that it is Dr. von Bülow's intention to take up his abode permanently in Boston. In Berlin, however, it is said that he is about to take the management of Kullack's Conservatory, a report which *Die Tonkunst* regards as too important to be disregarded, but too unlikely to be true.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

C. B. H.—We have made inquiries, but cannot find that Schubert's part-songs for male voices, contained in No. 1,046 of the "Peters" edition, have been published in English.

D. P.—The two charming English songs, "I fear thy kisses, gentle maiden," and "Sweet village bells," alluded to in the *Times* report of Mme. Christine-Nilsson's concert, but without mention of their author, are the composition of Mr. J. W. Davison, and are published by Duncan Davison and Co.

All communications respecting Contributions should be addressed to the Editor, and must be accompanied by the name and address of the writer, as a guarantee of good faith.

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